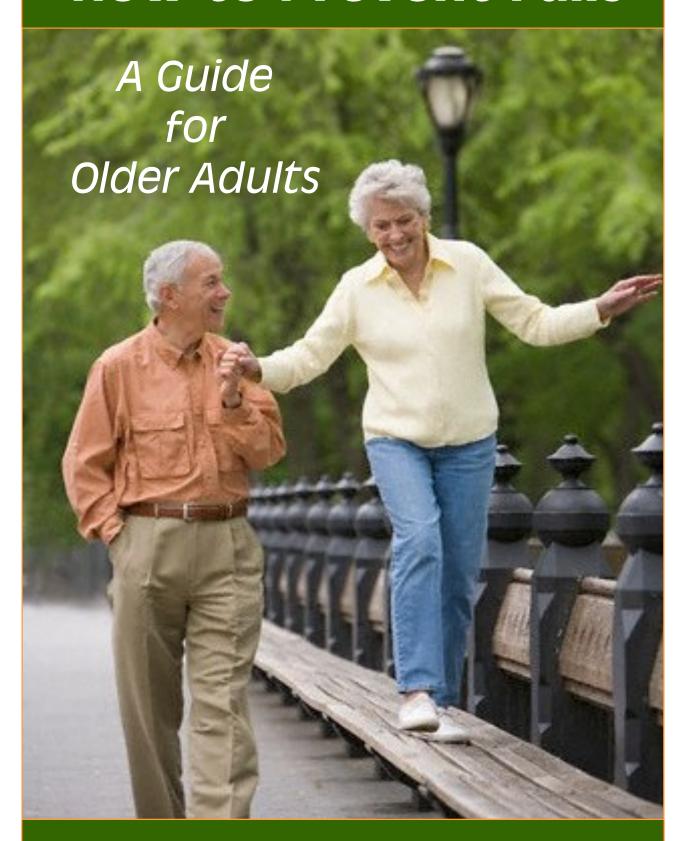
How to Prevent Falls







To prevent falls, take care of your health. Be physically active.

- Regular exercise improves mood and makes you healthier at any age. It's never too late to start.
- Physical activity helps prevent and control high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and many other conditions.
- Exercise also lowers your chances of falling because it strengthens muscles and improves balance.
- Adults should get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, such as a brisk walk, at least 5 days a week. But any amount is good some activity is better than none!
- You can spread out your activity you don't have to do it all at once. Just 10 minutes at a time is fine.
- Exercise that improves balance and coordination, such as Tai Chi, is especially helpful in preventing falls but any kind of exercise is good.
- Ask your doctor or health care provider about the best type of physical activity for you.

Ask your health care provider to review all your medicines.



- As you get older, medicines may affect you differently. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review all the medicines you take, including herbal remedies and over-the-counter drugs. Your doctor can change your medicines and tell you if there are any you no longer need.

Have your vision checked.

- Poor vision can increase your risk of falls, so visit an eye doctor at least once a year.
- You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision.



Other Safety Tips

 Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.

 Wear shoes both inside and outside the house.
Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.

 Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare.

 Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone.

 Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up.

 Think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall.





More Information and Help

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Injury Prevention Program http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/ems/prevention/prevention menu.html

Montana DPHHS Senior & Long Term Care http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/index.shtml

Montana Arthritis Foundation

http://www.arthritis.org/chapters/rocky-mountain/

Montana Geriatric Education Center

http://mtgec.umontana.edu/